

# BARBARA ROSENE

JAZZ VOCALIST

## A ROSENE IN FULL BLOOM

CAROLE & CO: REFLECTIONS ON CAROLE LOMBARD AND CLASSIC HOLLYWOOD

Carole Lombard never considered herself much of a singer; above is sheet music from her only genuine foray into song, "Swing High, Swing Low." But that doesn't mean she didn't like music. After all, one of Lombard's most passionate romances was with crooner-bandleader Russ Columbo, and Carole not only made a film with Bing Crosby, but adored his music. I don't know what kind of record collection she had, but I'm certain she appreciated the great performers and composers of the day. (And in her day, there were many.)

One of the tangents we occasionally go into at "Carole & Co." is the music of the 1920s and '30s. First of all, it provides a feel for life in Lombard's time. Secondly, it has genuine artistic merit.

These days, it's difficult to find current performers who not only understand and appreciate this music, but interpret it as well. And that's something the subject of today's entry does magnificently. She's a woman from Ohio named Barbara Rosene.

Rosene's special passion is for songs from the 1920s and '30s, honoring the likes of Annette Hanshaw and Ruth Etting. But she's smart enough to make their songs her own; her music is neither a slavish imitation nor a mere nostalgia trip. Rosene brings the songs to life on their own merits, not as artifacts.

Rosene's been performing for about a decade now. Originally, her forte was swing-era music from the late '30s and '40s, music she still has great fondness for. (She has toured with the Harry James Orchestra, whose leader, Fred Radke, played with James in the '60s and '70s.) But as the years went on, her interest grew in the pop music that preceded swing.

Over the past decade, she has made several CDs, all of which can be purchased at her Web site, <http://www.barbararosene.com>.

I'd like to tell you more about Rosene, but for the next few days, at least, I don't have to. That's because last week, Barbara appeared on the wonderful public radio program, "Hot Jazz Saturday Night," where she discussed her music and influences with host Rob Bamberger. (His show is three hours long; she appears in the final two hours.) You'll hear some of her records, and in many cases compare them directly to the originals. To check it out, go to <http://wamu.org/programs/hjsn/> -- but don't delay, as it will probably be replaced by the next week's show by Monday.